



**LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Henry J. Mroz Administration Office**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

**William J. Samaras**  
**Mayor and Chairperson**

**Jackie Doherty**  
**Vice-Chairperson**

**Andre P. Descoteaux**  
**Robert J. Hoey Jr.**  
**Dominik Hok Lay**  
**Connie A. Martin**  
**Gerard Nutter**

## **Policy Subcommittee Meeting**

**Thursday, September 19, 2019**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**Tel: (978) 674-4324**  
**Fax: (978) 937-7609**

**Subcommittee Members Present:**

Chairperson Gerry Nutter and Jackie Doherty  
Connie Martin was absent

**School Department Personnel Present:**

Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement  
Officer  
Rosa Segarra-Morales, Student Support  
Specialist and Homeless Liaison & Foster Care  
Contact

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Chairperson Gerry Nutter called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. **Homeless Students Enrollment Policy Revision**
2. **Opportunities for Children in Foster Care Policy**
3. **Strategic Planning Options**

Ms. Phillips addressed the Subcommittee and asked Ms. Segarra-Morales, Student Support Specialist and Homeless Liaison, to speak to the Subcommittee about the Homeless Students Enrollment Policy Revision and the Opportunities for Children in Foster Care Policy.

➤ **Homeless Students Enrollment Policy Revision and Opportunities for Children in Foster Care Policy**

Ms. Segarra- Morales stated that in December 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law and replaced the No Child Left Behind Act. She stated that ESSA is a federal act that focuses on ensuring all students have access to equitable resources, along with high academic standards. The Lowell

Public Schools current district policies need to be updated due to the full implementation of ESSA in 2017-2018. She stated that one of the changes is that “students awaiting foster care” were removed from the provisions and students in Foster Care now have their own rights under ESSA. A child in Foster Care is defined as one who is placed away from their parents and guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility for a period of twenty-four (24) hours and beyond. Currently there are 701 actively enrolled students identified as homeless and the majority of them (57.8%) are doubled up (residing with other people due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reasons) and 140 homeless students are on IEPs. In addition, there are 101 actively enrolled students that are in foster care. Ms. Segarra-Morales stated that homeless students are entitled to transportation at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an accompanied youth, the liaison) to their school of origin or the school where they are enrolled until the end of the school year. She stated that these changes are already being implemented and we are just making sure that Lowell Public Schools policies reflect the change.

Ms. Phillips stated that polices have been provided to the Committee and changes are in red as well as the language that has been removed is shown with a line through it.

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to recommend to the full School Committee that they approve the revisions and changes to the Homeless and Foster Care Policies; seconded by Mr. Nutter. 2 yeas, 1 absent APPROVED**

➤ **Strategic Planning Options**

Ms. Phillips stated that the Lowell Public Schools, under the leadership of Superintendent Boyd, is building a bold multi-year strategic plan based on the values of equity, excellence, and empowerment. This position will play a critical role in communicating and supporting the district’s commitment to eliminate the racial, ethnic and linguistic achievement and opportunity gaps, among all students. It also will support the district’s commitment to equitable funding and resources among the district’s diverse schools and engagement of families with courtesy, dignity, respect and cultural understanding.

The strategic plan will be a multi-year comprehensive plan that will be developed through district wide and community-wide input for the School Committee’s review with final approval slated for Spring 2020. Ms. Phillips stated that if the Lowell Public Schools (LPS) chooses to employ a contractor the district would look for an individual or company with a strategic planning skillset. The contractor may have additional resources (data analysis, graphic design) for a “one stop shop” experience and may have added costs for travel/ancillary. If the district chose to go with a part time employee rather than a contractor, the district would also be looking for an individual with a strategic planning skillset and we would be looking at a localized pool of candidates. The district also has the ability to use internal resources (data analysis, graphic design), but may have to identify external support for resources that exceed the district’s capacity. The advantage for the district having a part-time employee is that we would have greater control over time and task assignments and would have increased on-site presence.

Mr. Nutter stated that he would be in favor of a part time employee and felt it gave the district much more flexibility and he stated that the person chosen could then attend meetings in the day as well as at night (neighborhood meeting and School Site Council, etc.).

Ms. Doherty stated that we absolutely have the talent locally and she agrees with what Mr. Nutter stated above and she believes it would be more beneficial to the district.

Ms. Phillips asked if we could finalize the temporary job description.

Ms. Doherty said she supports the recommendation, but feels you can move forward seeing that the Committee has already approved the \$50,000.

Mr. Nutter stated that the Committee already approved this request and he is appreciative of the administration wanting to be transparent. He stated that he believes we don't need to bring this back for a vote, but could bring it back more as an update to the Committee showing what direction the district is going in.

Ms. Phillips stated that she will check with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) around the contract options. She stated that she wants to make sure she follows the rules of the contract process.

Ms. Doherty stated that after Ms. Phillips receives that information from the CFO, she can come back to the Committee with an update. She stated that the administration can always bring it to the Committee to reaffirm the vote if you feel the direction has changed.

Ms. Phillips reiterated that the contract is only for six (6) months and then the employment is over.

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 5:49 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Nutter. 2 yeas, 1 absent  
APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LP' with a stylized flourish.

Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity &  
Engagement Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd,  
Superintendent and Secretary, Lowell  
School Committee

LP/mes